

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, and 24 are independent claims.

As an initial matter, the Examiner has acknowledged the claim for foreign priority and confirmed receipt of the priority document on page 2 of the Office Action, but has not acknowledged the claim on the Office Action Summary. For clarification of the record, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority on the Summary of the next correspondence.

In addition, the Examiner has not forwarded an initialed copy of the PTO 1449 form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement on April 30, 2003. As such, Applicants have filed concurrently with this Amendment a *Request for Acknowledgment of IDS* with copies of the IDS and PTO 1449 form submitted on April 30, 2003 and a copy of the date stamped post card. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to initial and consider these references.

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract, alleging that it is too long. In response, Applicants have deleted the reference numerals from the Abstract so that it is shorter than 150 words. As such, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Although the Examiner has not rejected any specific claims, the Examiner has made a general reference to 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and has alleged that the phrase “the other electrode of the first AC power supply being connected to a ground potential point” is indefinite and inconsistent with the present specification. In response, Applicants respectfully

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

direct the Examiner's attention to the non-limiting embodiments shown in Figs. 1 and 5, which are non-limiting examples of diagrams in which one electrode of the AC Power Supply 9, 10 is connected to a ground potential point.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-7, 9-12, and 14-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hanaoka (US 4,208,869). Claims 8 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being rejected over Hanaoka in view of JP 2000-047638 ("JP '638"). We propose traversing these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-5

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL device driving device having 1) an EL device in which one electrode of the EL device is connected to a first EL driving IC and the other electrode of the EL device is connected to a second EL driving IC, and 2) first and second AC power supplies, each power supply having one electrode connected to a first input terminal of one of the EL driving ICs.

Several embodiments of Hanaoka disclose an EL sheet illumination device with a driver circuit that converts input DC Voltage to AC Voltage that is applied to the EL sheet. For example, Figs. 3-5 show embodiments in which an inverter circuit (driving circuit) provides an AC current to the EL sheet B. Hanaoka at 4:36-5:16. Furthermore, Figs. 10-12 show embodiments in which the driving circuit j supplies an AC circuit to the EL sheet B. Hanaoka at

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

7:38-9:5. Figs. 25, 29, and 32-35 show similar embodiments. However, in these embodiments, the AC current is merely produced by the inverter circuits or driving circuits and is not connected to a first input terminal of an EL driving IC.

Moreover, Fig. 16 of Hanaoka shows an embodiment in which an effective rectangular AC current is generated by repeatedly reversing the direction of the high output DC Voltage input to the EL sheet B so that it is obtained first from one electrode of the EL sheet and then from the other electrode. Hanaoka at 11:67-12:21. Consequently, the interaction of both sides of the switching device 39 applies an effective AC current to the EL sheet. Because it is the input to the EL sheet itself that is subject to an AC current, the switching device 39 is not connected to an AC power supply, but is instead provided with a DC power supply (Hanaoka at 11:34-42). As such, Hanaoka does not teach an AC Power supply with one electrode connected to a first input terminal of one of the EL driving ICs.

In addition, the embodiments shown in Figs. 17, 18, 20, and 22 are also clearly not applicable because each of these embodiments shows one of the electrodes of the EL sheet B, 86 connected to ground, and as such do not have “one electrode is connected to a first EL driving IC and a second electrode connected to a second EL driving IC.”

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 1 at least for the reasons discussed above, and to withdraw the rejection of claims 2-4 at least because of their dependency from claim 1.

Claims 6-10

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

With respect to independent claim 6, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL device driving device having 1) an EL device in which one electrode is connected to an EL driving IC and the other electrode is connected to a first AC power supply, and 2) a second AC Power supply with one electrode connected to a first input terminal of the EL driving ICs.

As is discussed above with respect to claim 1, the embodiments shown in Figs. 3-5, 10-12, 16, 25, 29, and 32-35 are inapplicable because they do not show an AC Power supply with one electrode connected to a first input terminal of the EL driving ICs.

In addition, as is also discussed above, the embodiments shown in Figs. 17, 18, 20, and 22 are inapplicable because one of the electrodes of the EL sheet B, 86 are connected to a ground, and as such do not have one electrode that is connected to a first EL driving IC and a second electrode that is connected to a first a first AC power supply.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 6 at least for the reasons discussed above, and to withdraw the rejection of claims 7 9, and 10 at least because of their dependency from claim 6. In addition, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 8 at least because of its dependency from claim 6 and because JP '638 (which the Examiner alleges as teaching a plurality output terminals and a plurality of controllers) does not make up for the deficiencies in Hanaoka discussed above.

Claims 11-15

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

Applicants have amended claim 11, and respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 11 at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL device driving device having an EL device with 1) one electrode connected to a discrete EL driving IC with a controller for turning on or off an alternating current flowing between the output terminal of the EL driving IC and an input terminal of the EL driving IC, and 2) the other electrode connected to a discrete AC Power supply.

The embodiments shown in Hanaoka's Figs. 3-5, 10-12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 25, 29, and 32-35 are inapplicable because they do not disclose a discrete AC power supply connected to one electrode of the EL sheet B, 86 and the other electrode of the EL sheet connected to a discrete EL driving IC. For example, with respect to the embodiment shown in Fig. 10, the driving circuit j, which applies an AC current to the EL sheet B, is connected to both ends of the EL sheet B. Furthermore, in the embodiment shown in Fig. 16 both sides of the switching device 39 must work together to provide an AC current. Therefore, there is no embodiment of Hanaoka that has a discrete driving IC connected to one electrode of the EL sheet and a discrete AC power supply connected to the other electrode of the EL device.

As such, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 11 at least for the reasons discussed above, and to withdraw the rejection of claims 12, 14, and 15 at least because of their dependency from claim 6. In addition, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 13 at least because of its dependency from claim 11 and because JP '638 (which the Examiner alleges as teaching a plurality output

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

terminals and a plurality of controllers) does not make up for the deficiencies in Hanaoka discussed above.

Claims 16-20

Applicants have amended claim 16, and respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 16 at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. The claim amendments are fully supported by the original specification at least at Fig. 9 and pages 43 and 44. Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL driving device with 1) one electrode connected to a discrete AC Power supply, and 2) the other electrode connected to the diodes of first and second energizing circuits of a discrete EL driving IC.

As is discussed above with respect to claim 11, there is no embodiment of Hanaoka that has a discrete driving IC connected to one electrode of the EL sheet and a discrete AC power supply connected to the other electrode of the EL device.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 16 at least for the reasons discussed above, and to withdraw the rejection of claims 17-20 at least because of their dependency from claim 16.

Claims 21-23

With respect to independent claim 21, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL device driving method in which 1) current is passed from a first AC power supply to one electrode of a EL device through a diode within a

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

first EL driving device IC, and 2) current is passed from a second AC power supply to the other electrode of the EL device through an output transistor within a second EL driving device IC.

As is discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, the embodiments of Hanaoka shown in Figs. 17, 18, 20, and 22 are clearly inapplicable because one of the electrodes of the EL sheet B, 86 is connected to ground.

Furthermore, as is discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 6, the embodiments shown in Figs. 3-5, 10-12, 16, 25, 29, and 32-35 of Hanaoka are not applicable because they do not show a current passed from an AC power supply to the electrode of an EL device through an EL driving IC. Instead, in these embodiments, the AC current is merely produced by the driving circuits and is not passed through the driving circuits.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 21 for at least the reasons discussed above, and to withdraw the rejection of claims 22 and 23 at least because of their dependency from claim 21.

Claims 24-29

With respect to independent claim 24, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection at least because Hanaoka does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Hanaoka does not teach or suggest the claimed EL device driving method in which 1) current is passed from a first AC power supply to one electrode of a EL device, and 2) current is passed from a second AC power supply to the other electrode of the EL device through an output transistor within an EL driving device IC.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 09/844,275
Docket No. Q64296

All of the embodiments of Hanaoka are inapplicable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 21. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 24 for the reasons discussed above, and the rejection of claims 25-29 at least because of their dependency from claim 24.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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